

## **Financial Scholars Essay Scholarship Contest**

The Office of the Kansas Securities Commissioner and the Office of the State Bank Commissioner are consumer protection agencies dedicated to keeping Kansans informed on issues concerning their finances, and promoting integrity and increasing transparency and fairness in the financial services industry.

Our agencies are sponsoring an essay competition and will award up to 5 scholarships to Kansas high school seniors in the 2014-15 school year. All students who submit an essay will receive a \$10 Amazon.com gift card to be used toward the purchase of a financial app, tool or book of their choice.

### **Student Scholarship Awards:**

First Place: \$2,500

Second Place: \$2,000

Third Place: \$1,500

Fourth Place: \$1,000

Fifth Place: \$500

### **STUDENT TOPIC ASSIGNMENT**

In a brief essay (**maximum 500 words**), **profile someone whose personal financial decisions and example have impacted the life or lives of others**. The profiled person can be living or deceased, personally known to you, or world-renown. The example the profiled person provided may have had a positive or negative influence.

Accompanying the essay, provide analysis (**800-1500 words**) of how you will apply the lesson(s) learned from the individual you profiled to your own life as you prepare for your own higher education. Please incorporate at least two of the following into your analysis:

- Comparison of the cost of various types of higher education (i.e. technical college, community college, or a 4-year college or university in Kansas vs. out-of-state school)
- The pros/cons of borrowing money for higher education vs. paying as you go, or finding more affordable educational options
- The earning potential of your chosen degree and the average debt load and pay-off time the average graduate in that field will face upon completing higher education
- The importance of generational re-investment (i.e. knowledge, wealth, presence, etc.) as a part of a long-term sustainability solution for Kansas communities

## WHO

The competition is open to any public, private or homeschool Kansas high school Senior who meets the following two qualifications:

- 1) The Senior must be planning to attend a Kansas technical school, college or university**
- 2) The Senior must have enrolled in at least one KSC or OSBC \*sponsored program** (*EverFi, LifeSmarts or The Stock Market Game*) during their high school career. A parent or teacher will be asked to verify student participation in one of the sponsored programs to confirm eligibility. Successful completion of a sponsored course is required before an awarded prize can be claimed.

### **Teacher Prize:**

The teacher of the first place student winner will receive a \$150 gift card to the teacher supply store of his or her choice.

**\*If you are not enrolled in a sponsored program but would like to enroll for free today and be eligible for the 2015 Essay Scholarship Contest, call Shannon Stone at 913.652.9164 (Securities Commissioner Office), or Dana Branam at 785.296.1783 (Bank Commissioner's Office).**

## HOW

- Style: Op-ed
- Format: Word document
- Entries must be typed in 12-point font and double-spaced.
- The essay should be written in English and should not exceed 500 words.
- The personal application and analysis should be between 800 and 1500 words.
- In-text source citation (NO footnoted papers, please).

A completed Entry Form must accompany each essay submission. Words on Entry form will not count toward the total word count. The Entry Form may be typed or neatly handwritten.

## WHEN

Essay submissions will be accepted **February 15, 2015 through 11:59 p.m. CST April 1, 2015**. Judge's clock is the official time keeper.

**Entry forms and essays should be emailed by the deadline to [shannon.stone@ksc.ks.gov](mailto:shannon.stone@ksc.ks.gov)**

### **Announcement of Winners & Award Date:**

The winning essays will be announced on or before Friday, April 24, 2015. Scholarships will be awarded at the 2015 Financial Scholars Awards Ceremony in Topeka, Kansas in May 2015.

### **JUDGING & LEGAL TERMS**

Essays will be judged based on the following criteria:

- Understanding of and Adherence to Topic (40 points)
- Personal Expression and Supporting Evidence (30 points)
- Continuity and Vocabulary (20 points)
- Punctuation and Spelling (10 points)

By submitting an entry to the competition, entrants acknowledge that all submissions may be posted on the Offices of the State Banking Commissioner (OSBC) and the Securities Commissioner's (KSC) website or their social media outlets for viewing by the general public. Entrants also grant in perpetuity, a nonexclusive license to edit, publish, display, duplicate or otherwise use the submission for the Sponsors (OSBC and KSC) and their Designees in their sole discretion whatsoever and without further notice or compensation.